



March 31, 2021

Dear Friends,

We have some important news to share. After over 40 years of training and placing capuchin monkeys to help adults with severe mobility impairments live more independent and engaged lives, we are transitioning our organization to focus on the benefits of the human animal bond interaction. After careful and thoughtful reflection, and a deep understanding of the landscape around us, we are ceasing future training and placement services. We will continue supporting our current recipients and special care homes. And, we will continue to care for our older monkeys who reside with us in Boston. All our families and their service monkeys, and our post-service monkeys at our Monkey Living Center (formerly the Monkey College) in Boston are very special to all of us. Our commitment to every animal in our program is of paramount importance. We will be adding information on the new Monkey Living Center to our website shortly—this information will be located at monkeyhelpers.org/emergency.

There are many reasons for our decision. Technology has advanced to such a level that our beloved monkeys are out of a job! People with severe mobility limiting issues are able to access resources far beyond what a monkey can provide. Pursuing meaningful careers, advancing education, and fulfilling opportunities are becoming less of an obstacle which is wonderful news. This gives all of us at Helping Hands great hope that technology will continue to be a force for good. Additionally, a number of laws make it impossible to continue placing monkeys with individuals around the country:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act only recognizes dogs and miniature horses as service animals.
- The U.S. Department of Transportation recently ruled that primates are no longer welcome to fly (effectively canceling any hopes of transporting our capuchins outside of New England).
- A majority of states prohibit primates in home environments.

All of these restrictions, as well as the advancing ages of our monkeys, have led us to the conclusion that we must build on our legacy and use our vast knowledge to work with communities around the globe to understand how humans and animals interact.

Many of you support our work financially which allowed us to accomplish the work of training and placing monkeys with recipients who needed them. Now our monkeys need you. Please do not forget them. While we transition our organization, we hope we can still rely on you to help us support both our post-service monkeys and our current recipients and their service monkeys.

In the coming months we will be communicating with you through letters, social media, and the launch of a new website to discuss our future vision and. We hope that you will stay engaged with us, continue to support our monkeys in their post service years, and come along for our journey as we transition to an organization providing global insight into and support for how to proactively assist humankind at the economic, environmental, and social levels through the prism of the human-animal bond arena.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diane S. Nahabedian".

Diane S. Nahabedian
Executive Director

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Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers

